



Department Source: Community Development - Planning

To: City Council

From: City Manager & Staff

Council Meeting Date: September 5, 2023

Re: Benton-Stephens Neighborhood Historic Survey – Historic Preservation Fund Grant Phase 1

Executive Summary

Approval of this resolution would authorize the City Manager to submit a FY 2025 Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) “final” grant application and fund a historical survey of a portion of the Benton-Stephens Neighborhood. Preservation fund grants are awarded on a 60:40 maximum federal – minimum local matching basis. Grant funds are dispersed as a reimbursement of project expenditures.

Discussion

The proposed grant, if awarded, would permit the City to hire a qualified consultant, per Section 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 61 (*Procedures for state, tribal, and local government historic preservation programs*), to conduct a historic architectural survey of the Benton-Stephens Neighborhood. The proposed survey area is bounded by Business Loop 70 (north), Broadway (south), Old Highway 63 (east), and College Avenue (west). This boundary includes roughly 320 acres and 1000 distinct addresses. The survey boundary varies slightly from the existing Benton-Stephens Urban Conservation Overlay District, as it includes properties located north of the Colt Railroad and Ammonette Street, south of Business Loop 70 (historically Highway 40). These properties are included in the survey area in an effort to utilize the existing road network to define a simplified boundary, and in order to avoid potential survey gaps.

The majority of the subject properties meet the age requirement (50 years) for designation as local historic properties. This survey will supplement others completed by the City, such as the North Central Columbia Survey (completed in three phases from 2016 through 2021), informing policy decisions and in determining potential areas for focused preservation efforts, such as designation of historic districts and/or landmarks and neighborhood planning efforts. Within the proposed survey boundary, there are pockets of highly intact residential properties, industrial areas, educational facilities, and traditional commercial corridors. The former Southern Railway/Norfolk Southern railroad line (now COLT Railroad) has had a significant influence on development in central Columbia. This relationship is a significant piece of the story of growth and development of Columbia’s industrial and business community. The railway lies on the northern boundary of the Benton-Stephens Urban Conservation Overlay District, and is included in the survey area.

The Benton-Stephens Neighborhood Association has continuously sought a historic survey of the neighborhood, and indicated support for the project in the past. Due to the cost-prohibitive nature of surveying the entire neighborhood, the proposed survey would be phased over the course of 4-5 years. Final phasing of the project will be determined in



City of Columbia

701 East Broadway, Columbia, Missouri 65201

conversations with the State Historic Preservation Office, and its Grants Manager. The most-recent phase of the North Central Survey was completed for a total cost of \$25,000, and included roughly 250 individual historic resources. Using this example, the HPC expects the Benton-Stephens survey to reach a total expense of up to \$100,000, which would be allocated over the anticipated 4-5 year project. This arrangement would equate to an estimated annual expense of \$25,000 to the City, with 60% (\$15,000) to be returned at the completion of each phase, in a reimbursement of the Federal share.

The Historic Preservation Commission will discuss the grant application at their September 6th meeting, where their support is anticipated. A pre-application, which is attached for reference, was submitted to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for preliminary comments on August 18th. Previous pre-applications for similar survey work garnered only minor technical corrections in the comments from the SHPO. Comments are expected on or before September 18th, and the final application is due October 2nd. A resolution of support by City Council is required as an attachment to the final grant application.

The Historical Preservation Commission has delivered five previous architectural surveys using the HPF match funds grant program (Garth's Addition, East Downtown/Locust, and North-Central Phases I-III). These past survey grants represent an investment of over \$80,000 in documenting Columbia's historic properties, with roughly \$48,000 reimbursed to the City from the Historic Preservation Grant Fund. In the recent past, the local funding for these project was appropriated by the City Council from their discretionary funds, due to the limited funding available to the HPC in their annual budget; with just \$5,000 allocated annually to contractual expenses. The HPC also recently received preliminary approval of their FY 2024 grant application, which will fund procurement of a consultant to prepare a city-wide historic preservation plan. The grant agreement for this project will be considered by City Council at the September 18th meeting, seeking approval of \$25,000 in funding, with \$15,000 anticipated in reimbursements.

A locator map and the Benton-Stephens Survey Pre-Application are attached for review.

Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: If four phases are anticipated, initial expenses will total \$50,000 over the next two years (FY 2025 & 2026), with an anticipated Federal reimbursement of \$30,000, resulting in a local share of \$20,000. No expenditures are anticipated out of the FY 2024 budget.

Long-Term Impact: If four phases are anticipated, long-term expenses will total another \$50,000 over the following two years (FY 2027 & 2028), with an anticipated Federal reimbursement of \$30,000, resulting in a local share of \$20,000.



Strategic & Comprehensive Plan Impact

Strategic Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Not Applicable, Secondary Impact: Secondary, Tertiary Impact: Tertiary

Comprehensive Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Land Use & Growth Management, Secondary Impact: Economic Development, Tertiary Impact: Infrastructure

Legislative History

Date	Action
5/1/00	Approved: Benton-Stephens Urban Conservation Overlay District (Ord. # 016424)

Suggested Council Action

Approve the resolution to authorize the City Manager to authorize up to \$100,000 in funding for four proposed phases of a historic survey of the Benton-Stephens Neighborhood, to be allocated over the 2025-2028 fiscal years. And, authorize the City Manager to submit an application for the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) grant, in the amount of \$25,000, to complete the first phase of the survey.